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41 CFR Ch. 102 (7–1–13 Edition)

by the Act if it becomes primarily advisory in nature. It is the responsibility of the administering agency to determine whether a committee is pri-

marily operational. If so, it does not fall under the requirements of the Act and this part.

APPENDIX A TO SUBPART A OF PART 102–3—KEY POINTS AND PRINCIPLES

This appendix provides additional guidance in the form of answers to frequently asked questions and identifies key points and principles that may be applied to situations not covered elsewhere in this subpart. The guidance follows:

| Key points and principles | Section(s) | Question(s) | Guidance |
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| I. FACA applies to advisory committees that are either “established” or “utilized” by an agency. | 102–3.25, 102–3.40(d), 102–3.40(f) | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A local citizens group wants to meet with a Federal official(s) to help improve the condition of a forest’s trails and quality of concessions. May the Government meet with the group without chartering the group under the Act? 2. May an agency official attend meetings of external groups where advice may be offered to the Government during the course of discussions? 3. May an agency official participate in meetings of groups or organizations as a member without chartering the group under the Act? 4. Is the Act applicable to meetings between agency officials and their contractors, licensees, or other “private sector program partners?” | <p>A. The answer to questions 1, 2, and 3 is yes, if the agency does not either “establish” or “utilize” (exercise “actual management or control” over) the group. (i) Although there is no precise legal definition of “actual management or control,” the following factors may be used by an agency to determine whether or not a group is “utilized” within the meaning of the Act: (a) Does the agency manage or control the group’s membership or otherwise determine its composition? (b) Does the agency manage or control the group’s agenda? (c) Does the agency fund the group’s activities? (ii) Answering “yes” to any or all of questions 1, 2, or 3 does not automatically mean the group is “utilized” within the meaning of the Act. However, an agency may need to reconsider the status of the group under the Act if the relationship in question essentially is indistinguishable from an advisory committee established by the agency.</p> <p>B. The answer to question 4 is no. Agencies often meet with contractors and licensees, individually and as a group, to discuss specific matters involving a contract’s solicitation, issuance, and implementation, or an agency’s efforts to ensure compliance with its regulations. Such interactions are not subject to the Act because these groups are not “established” or “utilized” for the purpose of obtaining advice or recommendations.</p> |
| II. The development of consensus among all or some of the attendees at a public meeting or similar forum does not automatically invoke FACA. | 102–3.25, 102–3.40(d), 102–3.40(f) | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If, during a public meeting of the “town hall” type called by an agency, it appears that the audience is achieving consensus, or a common point of view, is this an indication that the meeting is subject to the Act and must be stopped? | <p>A. No, the public meeting need not be stopped. (i) A group must either be “established” or “utilized” by the executive branch in order for the Act to apply. (ii) Public meetings represent a chance for individuals to voice their opinions and/or share information. In that sense, agencies do not either “establish” the assemblage of individuals as an advisory committee or “utilize” the attendees as an advisory committee because there are no elements of either “management” or “control” present or intended.</p> |

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| III. Meetings between a Federal official(s) and a collection of individuals where advice is sought from the attendees on an individual basis are not subject to the Act. | 102–3.40(e) | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. May an agency official meet with a number of persons collectively to obtain their individual views without violating the Act? 2. Does the concept of an “individual” apply only to “natural persons?” | A. The answer to questions 1 and 2 is yes. The Act applies only where a group is established or utilized to provide advice or recommendations “as a group.” (i) A mere assemblage or collection of individuals where the attendees are providing individual advice is not acting “as a group” under the Act. (ii) In this respect, “individual” is not limited to “natural persons.” Where the group consists of representatives of various existing organizations, each representative individually may provide advice on behalf of that person’s organization without violating the Act, if those organizations themselves are not “managed or controlled” by the agency. |
| IV. Meetings between Federal, State, local, and tribal elected officials are not subject to the Act. | 102–3.40(g) | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is the exclusion from the Act covering elected officials of State, local, and tribal governments acting in their official capacities also applicable to associations of State officials? | A. Yes. The scope of activities covered by the exclusion from the Act for intergovernmental activities should be construed broadly to facilitate Federal/State/local/tribal discussions on shared intergovernmental program responsibilities or administration. Pursuant to a Presidential delegation, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issued guidelines for this exemption, authorized by section 204(b) of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995, 2 U.S.C. 1534(b). (See OMB Memorandum M–95–20, dated September 21, 1995, published at 60 FR 50651 (September 29, 1995), and which is available from the Committee Management Secretariat (MC), General Services Administration, 1800 F Street, NW, Washington, DC 20405–0002). |
| V. Advisory committees established under the Act may perform advisory functions only, unless authorized to perform “operational” duties by the Congress or by Presidential directive. | 102–3.30(e), 102–3.40(k) | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are “operational committees” subject to the Act, even if they may engage in some advisory activities? | A. No, so long as the operational functions performed by the committee constitute the “primary” mission of the committee. Only committees established or utilized by the executive branch in the interest of obtaining advice or recommendations are subject to the Act. However, without specific authorization by the Congress or direction by the President, Federal functions (decisionmaking or operations) cannot be delegated to, or assumed by, non-Federal individuals or entities. |

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| VI. Committees authorized by the Congress in law or by Presidential directive to perform primarily “operational” functions are not subject to the Act. | 102–3.40(k) | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What characteristics are common to “operational committees?” 2. A committee created by the Congress by statute is responsible, for example, for developing plans and events to commemorate the contributions of wildlife to the enjoyment of the Nation’s parks. Part of the committee’s role includes providing advice to certain Federal agencies as may be necessary to coordinate these events. Is this committee subject to FACA? | <p>A. In answer to question 1, non-advisory, or “operational” committees generally have the following characteristics: (i) Specific functions and/or authorities provided by the Congress in law or by Presidential directive; (ii) The ability to make and implement traditionally Governmental decisions; and (iii) The authority to perform specific tasks to implement a Federal program.</p> <p>B. Agencies are responsible for determining whether or not a committee primarily provides advice or recommendations and is, therefore, subject to the Act, or is primarily “operational” and not covered by FACA.</p> <p>C. The answer to question 2 is no. The committee is not subject to the Act because: (i) Its functions are to plan and implement specific tasks; (ii) The committee has been granted the express authority by the Congress to perform its statutorily required functions; and (iii) Its incidental role of providing advice to other Federal agencies is secondary to its primarily operational role of planning and implementing specific tasks and performing statutory functions.</p> |

Subpart B—How Are Advisory Committees Established, Renewed, Reestablished, and Terminated?

§ 102–3.45 What does this subpart cover and how does it apply?

Requirements for establishing and terminating advisory committees vary depending on the establishing entity and the source of authority for the advisory committee. This subpart covers the procedures associated with the establishment, renewal, reestablishment, and termination of advisory committees. These procedures include consulting with the Secretariat, preparing and filing an advisory committee charter, publishing notice in the FEDERAL REGISTER, and amending an advisory committee charter.

§ 102–3.50 What are the authorities for establishing advisory committees?

FACA identifies four sources of authority for establishing an advisory committee:

(a) *Required by statute.* By law where the Congress establishes an advisory committee, or specifically directs the President or an agency to establish it (*non-discretionary*);

(b) *Presidential authority.* By Executive order of the President or other Presidential directive (*non-discretionary*);

(c) *Authorized by statute.* By law where the Congress authorizes, but does not direct the President or an agency to establish it (*discretionary*); or

(d) *Agency authority.* By an agency under general authority in title 5 of the United States Code or under other general agency-authorizing statutes (*discretionary*).

§ 102–3.55 What rules apply to the duration of an advisory committee?

(a) An advisory committee automatically terminates two years after its date of establishment unless:

(1) The statutory authority used to establish the advisory committee provides a different duration;

(2) The President or agency head determines that the advisory committee has fulfilled the purpose for which it was established and terminates the advisory committee earlier;

(3) The President or agency head determines that the advisory committee is no longer carrying out the purpose